

A Brief

ACCOUNT
OF A *a. 570.*
Specifick Remedy

For Curing the

King's-Evil,

Confirmed by many Extra-
ordinary Experiments:

Containing likewise some other

USEFUL OBSERVATIONS.

In a Letter to a Friend.

*The Lord hath created Medicines out of the Earth,
and he that is wise will not abhor them; and hath
given Men Power and Skill, that he might be ho-
noured in his marvellous Works, Eccles. 38. 4, 6.*

By **WILLIAM VICKERS, M.A.**

LONDON,

Printed for J. Round at Seneca's Head in Ex-
change-Alley, and A. Collins at the Black Boy a-
gainst St. Dunstons Church in Fleet-street. 1709.

IV W a

MUSEUM
BRITAN
NICVM

BY WILLIAM VICKERS, M.A.

Printed for J. Wood, at Street, Hall in E.
change Alley, and at Collier's, the Black Boy's
Gallie St. D. in Church in New Bond, 1795

ACCOUNT

OF A Specifick Remedy

For Curing the

King's-Evil, &c.

S I R,

IN our late Conversation you desired some Account of my *Specifick Remedy* for curing the *King's-Evil*, a Distemper you know from my Infancy I was so extremely afflicted withal, that I never met with the like among all my Acquaintance; which Disease continued so many Years on me, with that Violence, that all hopes of Cure were given over by my Friends and self. The Distemper had seized all my Joints, my right Hand, the Fore-finger of the left, and both my Feet were so extremely afflicted therewith, that several Surgeons said they must be cut off; the Humour likewise fell with

that Severity on both Eyes, that the Sight thereof
were judged irrecoverably lost; and my Body also ren-
dered so extreamly weak and fee-
Eyes, Arms, Hands, ble, with its continual running
Legs, and Feet. in so many Places, that I could nei-
ther go or stand without Crut-

ches. In this miserable Condition (without any Hopes or
Prospect of Relief) I lived many Years, until it pleased
God to direct me unto the Knowledge of those Means,
the extraordinary Effects whereof as much exceeded mine
and all other Peoples Expectations, as the Benefit reaped
did my Merits; by the Use whereof (God be praised)
in a very few Months I became perfectly sound and well.
It's 16 Years and more since I was healed, enjoying now
as good Health and Sight, as most People do, without
any Fear or Apprehension of a Relapse, being able
to endure the coldest of Weather without suffering
any prejudice; to read until Midnight, and to walk as
much Ground every Day as the soundest Man living. I
once thought, as most People do, that the *King's-Evil*,
especially in such a high Degree as I had it, was in-
curable; and I had reason to believe it, after so ma-
ny Years Endeavours had been spent for a Cure to so lit-
tle purpose. As I never declined the Use of any Means,
which might give me the least Hopes or Prospect of Suc-
cess, so I never suffered any Remedy or Means to escape
my Knowledge (and most of them my Experience)
for want of a diligent Search and Enquiry. I was
stroaked twice by King *Charles II.* and thrice by King
James. It's incredible to tell the great Quantities of
Purges, Vomits, Diet-drinks, Lime-waters; besides ma-
ny other things, which I have taken in my time, to
as little purpose as tho I had done nothing, nay, had I
been so contented, it had been much better for me in
the main, constantly observing this Disease much more
turbulent and vexatious after *Purging and Vomiting,*
than when let alone and undisturbed. No Distemper
incident to Mankind, I am perswaded, requires less Me-
dicines than this; and yet I find no one treated with
more, with so little Advantage as this is, upon which

account I have often thought the Lord Bacon's Observation but too true, *That as variety of Medicines is the Offspring of Ignorance, so many Medicines have caused few Cures.*

But in order to give you some account of the Method of Cure, wherein I so happily succeeded: It providentially came into my Mind for to experience one single Remedy, believing that Simplicity of Medicine might be as effectual as that of Diet, the Use whereof first of all I began internally with five or six Grains, Morning and Evening, in a Glass of Spring-water; and for external Application, I used an Ointment and Cerecloth made with the same Remedy to dress the Sores withal, Morning and Night. This Method I continued some time, but afterwards, with much greater Advantage, I infused a certain Quantity of this Remedy in a Gallon of Spring-water, which when it was fine and clear, I made my constant Liquor, absolutely abstaining from all other Drinks, except a Glass of Wine now and then at my Meals. And by that time I had drunk of this *Specifick water* 18 or 20 Days, I perceived my Sores to run with a much greater Flux of Matter than ever I knew them to do before; also several foul Bones in several Joints came forth without any Pain or Trouble, *Arms, Hands, and Feet.* and several hard Swellings allwaged, and went away with the like ease.

My Strength likewise considerably increased, and my usual Pains, (upon any sudden Change or Alteration of the Weather) ceased, with such a visible Change and Alteration throughout my whole Constitution, that if I may so express it, I thought my self in a manner new created. Two things I observed very strange and unaccountable, That whereas my Sores for the first Month or six Weeks run so excessively, that one would have thought it impossible to subsist under so great a Consumption, yet my Strength increased the more; and by how much the more plentifully the Humour spent it self this way, by so much the more hearty and strong, I perceived my self to grow. The other thing I observed was, that my Urine would be as thick and ropy, as though it had been blended

with Whites of Eggs, or some such like viscous Matter, which continued until the Sores in every place begun to close and heal, as they did perfectly in about eight Months, or something less, during which Course I never found the least Tendency or Disposition unto Sicknes, or any other Inconveniency whatsoever, to attend the Use of the Means; but such a difference for Ease, that there was no Comparison between this Method of Cure, and those I had been formerly treated withal. The Slavery of *Physick* and *Surgery* was such a heavy Yoke unto me, that I have oftentimes chose to die, (had it been the Will of God) rather than to live; their Medicines also were commonly much more nauseous, than my Distemper; so that between one and the other I was weary of my Life, which I narrowly escaped losing; by taking two *Emeticks*, the one *Mercurial*, the other *Antimonial*, both of them cried up for rare Secrets, and so they had like to have proved in their Operation, for I thought I should never live to tell who hurt me. But on the contrary, that may be said of this Method of Cure, which the Apostle mentions of *Love*, therein was no Torment, no Sicknes, no Use of Knife or Caustick, nor any other Trouble or Confinement whatsoever; but every thing so natural and easy, that Nature therewith seemed much more delighted and refreshed, than averse to it; the more I used it, the more I sought it, which I believe was never yet known of any other Medicinal Course besides this, so easy and pleasant in its Operation, and yet so powerful. A Method of Cure according to my Judgment and Experience (having tried most) proved the most effectual, easy, and inoffensive that ever I met withal, nor yet heard of; and I verily believe that whenever this Disease is cured by any other hand, it must be done by some such way, or by none; it may be led off, but not driven; and the gentlest Methods in any Man's Hands will always prove the most successful. Men may purge and salivate their Guts out (as most People do) and not move it, and yet there are some *Simples* and Methods of *Diet*, which will effectually remove it, with infinite

less Trouble and Vexation than what People undergo in these Cases. I must acknowledge my self infinitely indebted unto Serjeant *Wiseman*, Mr. *Peirce*, and some others, now living, for their Advice and Assistance, being satisfied that those Gentlemen applied every thing which might give them any Hopes or Prospect of Success; but nothing availed, until it pleased God by a strange and wonderful Providence to direct me unto the Knowledge of this Remedy, which surpassed all my Hopes and Expectations, my self concluding that when the Endeavours of so many skilful and able Persons proved ineffectual, that nothing more could be done than what had been already essayed.

And as this Method proved the most effectual and safest way, so I found it likewise the most expeditious; such a Cure of a Disease of so many Years standing, in so short a time, I never heard of; that a Man therewith afflicted 18 or 20 Years in the highest Degree imaginable, should become perfectly sound and well, in seven or eight Months, is not, I think, very common; but had I waited eighteen Months longer, I should not have grudged the time for the obtaining this Cure, ~~whereof~~ ^{whereof} I had no manner of Reason ever to expect! But as nothing is impossible with God, so hath he likewise ~~chosen the foolish things of this World to confound the wise, and weak things of the World to confound the things which are mighty.~~ When this Remedy first came to my hands, I thought it the most unlikely thing in the World to effect a Cure, that a Man should hear of; and so foolish was I, like many other People, to despise it for some time, because it was not recommended by some great Person, whose Name and Authority might encourage its Use. But as I am now fully convinced of that Folly, so am I likewise satisfied (contrary to my former Opinions) that there is no Poison without an *Antidote*, nor any Disease without its *Specifick*, whereof *Nature* more than *Art* hath the greatest Number and Advantage; insomuch that I verily believe, if a Man were to write a History of Cures in all Diseases, most of them would be found

ound accomplished by the most simple and uncompounded Remedies; and moreover, that such were first of all rather discovered by Divine Revelation, Chance, or Accident, than by any Philosophy of the Schools. The Indians, who are perfect Strangers unto the Animal Oeconomy, having no other Knowledge of Physick and Surgery than what the Light of Nature helpeth them to, cure all their Diseases with the Application of their own *Roots and Plants*, and so perfectly skilled are they in the Virtues of *Simples*, that of some they prepare *Poisons*; and of others, *Antidotes*. The old *Galenists* who prescribed *Simples* only, were as certain and successful in their Cures, as our modern Physicians are

Chap. 11. with all their boasted Improvements. *Bagliv.* an Author of no mean Repute, saith, That the *Empericks* who despised the *Methods and Indications* of the *Rationalists*, cured the most stubborn and grievous Diseases with the Use of *Specificks*, as they call them. And in another Place, saith the same Author, This is evident, that both *Acute and Chronical Diseases* will be happily cured by that Man, who, by Chance, or a long Train of Experience, hath found out a Remedy which is able to choke the Disease specifically. Sir *Isaac Newton* likewise, among his other useful and excellent Observations, hath this, The great Defects in this excellent Science, speaking of Physick, seem chiefly owing to the Professors Application (especially since *Galen's* time) running so much upon Method, and so little upon Medicine. Miscel. p. 153. selves so much to Composition, and neglected the Use of *Simples*, as well as the Enquiries and Records of *Specifick Remedies*. Those who deny the Reality and Efficacy of *Specifick Remedies*, let them confute the honourable Mr. Boyle's Discourse of the Reconcilableness of *Specifick Medicines* to the Corpuscular Philosophy. *Hipocrates* very much depended on the Use of *Specificks*, frequently declaring, That his own Experience of them, and that of his Predecessors, was sufficient to recommend their Use, tho he could not rationally account for their Effects. *Galen*

len likewise relates several Cures done by some Simples, whereof he could *Galen, Lib. 2.* give no account of their Operation: And *Solenander* says, he could tell what were the Diseases of any Country, by seeing the Herbs that were most common in it; as among the *Danes* and *Dutch*, with whom the Scurvy is very frequent, Scurvy-grass grows plentifully. If a Man knew but the Virtues of our own native Simples, and could use them with that Simplicity as Nature yieldeth them, he might thereby become as famous as the Great *Hippocrates*, who studied *Nature* more than *Art*, and thought it not below him to inform himself of Remedies, tho by the meanest People confirmed by Experience: As for my own Part, tho I could neither read or write, yet from that long Experience which I have had of this Distemper, and with the help of this *Remedy*, through God's Assistance, I never fear curing it in most People, in much less time, with that same Ease I did it for my self. As I use no other means unto any, than what I did to my self; so the very same effects are always common unto others as they were to me, their Sores also running with the same Flux of Matter, (after the drinking of this Water) as mine did. I have by me a Box of Scales and foul Bones from divers Joints of other Persons, brought forth with the Use of this Specifick Water, their Urine likewise I have always observed to be as thick and ropy, as my own used to be; and tho they were never so weak and lame, yet I always found their Strength daily to encrease, as mine did; neither did I ever know the Humour to break out afresh upon any Person cured by this Method, no more than mine hath done these 17 Years past, the Truth whereof I can make appear by many Instances.

And as I thus fortunately lighted upon this extraordinary Remedy, whereby I have done so much good unto others, as well as to my self; so have I likewise gained some Knowledge and Experience from
my

my past Sufferings, upon which Account I may say as *holy David* did on another, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted.* From what I have seen and felt of this Distemper, I have learned so much Experience, that I know as well the Temper and Constitution of all those People afflicted with the same as I do my own; and can easily tell when such will suffer Pain, and when not; when their Sores will burn little or much; at what Seasons their Swellings will rise or fall; when they will break; and likewise what Air, Diet, Exercise, &c. will do them either good or hurt: of all which things I have given divers People warning, as several will bear me witness. Men read Books, and so become wise and learned by other Mens Thoughts and Notions; but after all the best Knowledge is ever gained by a Man's own Experience and Observation, which, as *Celsus* well observeth, is the principal thing to inform Men in a right Method of Cure. And therefore tho I must ascribe the Cure of my Distempers (under God) to the Use and Application of this Noble Remedy; yet I cannot deny but that I reap'd great Benefit also from a peculiar Diet, having good Reason to believe that where this Disease is not inveterate, and of long standing, such a Regimen would cure it without any other Assistance, whereof I have made two or three Experiments; and it's plain, I think, that *Hippocrates* and all other ancient Physicians, in all their Writings, shew a great Regard unto Diet, as a principal Branch of Physick, conducive to the Cure of most Diseases. *197* Having therefore obtained this great and unexpected Blessing, I then thought my self obliged, in Point of Charity, to make it publick, that others, if they pleased, might reap the same Benefit by it, as blessed be God I had done: and tho I never liked the manner of its Publication in the *Priests*, yet I have this Comfort and Satisfaction, to answer all Objections and Replies, that by so doing I have been able to cure some Scores of People who might have rotted alive, had

had it not been for those Advertisements. And tho
 this way of publishing Medicines and Cures is now
 esteemed Quackism, yet by the History of Physick
 it appears customary and usual among the Ancients.
*Whoever had gained any Experience upon himself or
 others, saith the Historian, made it publick.* And more-
 over, saith the same Author, *The* Dr. Drake's Hist.
Ancients were wont to carry their Sick and Diseased into their Mar- pag. 7.
kets, that all People passing by might
give their Advice, and encourage them to try what
themselves and others had in the like Cases used with Suc-
cess. But surely there needs no Excuse or Apology
 for this Undertaking, when it's to deliver Mankind
 from one of the greatest corporal Evils that possibly can
 befall them; I cannot perswade my self that any good
 Man will revile me on this account, seeing it's a Dis-
 ease which very few (if any) care to meddle withal,
 for my own part, as I never did, so I ever resolve not
 to injure their Practice, constantly declining all Peo-
 ples Applications, whilst they are under the Care
 and Management either of Physicians or Surgeons:
 And this I can justly affirm, that this way of helping
 others as miserable as my self formerly had the Mis-
 fortune to be, is now a Satisfaction to my mind equal
 to my own Cure; and altho I have bought my Know-
 ledge and Experience at a very dear Rate, yet I nei-
 ther grudge or complain of the Purchase for the Hap-
 piness sake which I now enjoy, of doing that good for
 others which once in my Life I would have given my
 All for to procure. And as I would not be thought
 so vain-glorious to assert this Remedy absolute and
 infallible in all Cases, so on the other hand I
 will never despair of perfecting a Cure in most,
 where there is any Grounds or Hopes to expect
 it. No Man I believe ever had this Disease in
 such a high Degree as my self, insomuch that all
 People pronounced me incurable: And therefore seeing
 it hath wrought such a wonderful Cure upon my self,
 there is some Reason to hope and expect, that it
 may

may do the like for others also, whereof I have so many Instances (besides my own) that no Man in Reason can desire more or greater Satisfaction, than I am able and ready to give upon the least Demand: And this I can assure all People, for their Encouragement, that if this *Remedy* doth them no good, it will never do them any hurt, being able to make it appear, that of 500 Persons unto whom I have given it, never any of them complained of the least hurt or injury attending its Use; and altho two or three have failed of Success, yet it's evident also from their own Confessions, that the Fault was owing more to their own impatient Tempers, than to the Medicine, thereby depriving themselves of that Benefit, which they might have reaped, had they allowed themselves a reasonable time for the perfecting their Cure. But nothing less than Miracles will content some, which I never yet promised, and shall never pretend to; nothing beyond the Use of Means, attended with God's Blessing, do I offer; and those who like of this are welcome to my Assistance, and therefore I shall not say any thing more in favour of this *Specifick*, the thing will speak for it self, referring it unto the Testimony and Commendation of those who have already reaped the same Benefit by it, as blessed be God I have done. Hereafter I shall entertain you with a short History of 78 Cures, the time when they commenced, and when perfected; also an exact Relation of those few Cases, wherein I failed, whereby you will be able to judge impartially, that if there be any such thing in Nature as a *Specifick* for curing the *King's-Evil*, this will always undoubtedly deserve that Title and Privilege.

Those People who dislike the taking of this *Remedy* in Spring-water, may take four or five Grains thereof twice a Day in any other Vehicle or Conserve they please, tho the former manner, according to my Judgment, is the best and most advantageous. As for the dressing of the Sores, if they be hollow and deep, the *Specifick Ointment* must be heated

Blood-

Blood-warm, and then poured in; the Cerecloth being also a little heated, must be laid over all: Which Dressings are to be repeated twice a Day, Morning and Night, for some time, but afterwards once in two or three Days will serve, if the *Specifick* is infused in Water (as I did for my own Use) then that Water must be their constant Liquor, and those who will take it this way will never have Cause to repent it, if they dare take my word. Those particular Instructions to be observed for Diets, I either deliver by word of Mouth, or else commit them unto Writing. For the Instruction of those who live at a great distance from me, whereof I have cured several whom I never yet saw, only by sending them the Medicine with Directions, which may be safely conveyed unto the remotest Parts of *Great Britain*, nay to the *East-Indies*, if required. No Time or Weather whatsoever can prejudice this *Specifick*, tho it were kept many Years; neither hath it any disagreeable Taste or Smell, which soever way it's taken, being likewise fully perswaded that this *Remedy* is of that sovereign Use, that if it were tried in some other Diseases, it might do the same Service as it hath done in this, especially in cancerous and leprous Humours, I have known it to excel all other Medicines: The first was a Woman's cancerous Breast, after the Day was fixed by the Surgeons of *St. Bartholomew's Hospital* for cutting it off, which it cured in a very few Months, whose Name is *Watson*, now living near *High-gate*. The other upon a young Lady extremely afflicted with the Leprosie; but having already exceeded the Bounds of an Epistle, I shall defer the Relation of these Cases unto the History of Cures which I have promised.

Herburn-Lane, near
Lombard-street, be-
hind the General
Post-Office, next
Door to the Sil-
ver-Smith.

Tours,

W. V.

FINIS.

The CASE of Charles Welch.

WHereas it pleased God in the Island of Jersey, after the Small Pox there, to afflict me in a grievous manner with the King's Evil; first, with a deep and large Ulcer in my Breast, then with two others on my right Arm; after these follow'd 5 more on my left Shoulder: And, lastly, 5 others on my left Arm; whereby I was depriv'd of the Use of both Arms, being also so extreme weak and lame, that I could neither go or help my self. I had all the Advice and Medicines that was possible, particularly under a Course of Salivation 7 Weeks; but these things having no effect upon me, I was remov'd hence into St. Thomas's Hospital, where I continu'd several Months; but not meeting with that Success in this Place neither, which many others have reaped; and being discharged, I was, by my Friends, then brought to Mr. Vicker's, a Clergy-Man, in Sherburn-Lane, who, beyond his own, and all other People's Expectations, hath now, God be praised, wrought a perfect and complete Cure, being now as sound and healthy as any other Person whatever. I lodge at a Shoe-makers, next door to the Cross-keys-Inn, Grace-Church-street, where may be seen much more of this Cure than is here related, by

Charles Welch.

Whereas

WHereas I *Mary Forbes*, being so grievously afflicted with the Evil in my Arms, Legs and Feet, that I could neither stand nor go without Cautches, and applying my self to Mr. *Vickers*, a Clergy-man in *Sherburn-lane*, am now by God's Blessing, and his Medicines, perfectly freed from that Distemper; which Cure will be testified by my Relations, Neighbours, and self, before any Person whensoever Mr. *Vickers* shall require it.

Mary Forbes, Octob. 13.

WHereas I *John Silks*, at the Olive-tree in the *Minorities*, having a Child, of late extremely afflicted with the King's Evil, do hereby own and declare, That the said Child is now perfectly cured, through the Blessing of God, by the Reverend Mr. *Vickers*, living in *Sherburn-lane*, near *Lombard-street*; where may be seen divers other extraordinary Cures as well attested, besides his own.

William *Hurup*, who was extremely afflicted with the King's Evil in his Eyes, that the Sight of both were almost lost, is now, in a few Month, cur'd by Mr. *Vickers*, a Clergy-man, living in *Sherburn-lane* near *Lombard-street*. The said *William Hurup* liveth at a Chandler's Shop, near the Three Tun-Ale-house on *Little Tower-hill*, going into *East-Smith-field*.

Mr. Vickers never advertiseth any Person's Name or Habitation cured by him, without their own Consent and Approbation first obtained.

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in *Lombard-street*, near *Sticks-market*.